subjects of the State irrespective of caste or creed, every subject should be eligible for the appointment that he was fit for. In the opinion of the member, the influence of a community depended upon the number of Government appoinments held by its members, because the authority of the Government was visible in every one of its constituents. The officers of the Government were respected irrespective of their caste or creed and caste prejudices were not shown against such officers. Caste distinction would therefore disappear if every community be fairly represented in public service. The member hoped that ere long the Ezhava community would be given due representation in the public service.

The Legislative Council and the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly were institutions established with the object of sharing the burden of administration with the people and thereby paving the way for democratic Government in view to keep pace with civilised countries. When that ideal was reached, communal representation might become out of place. But till then, communities had to be represented according to some basis. The most acceptable basis would be that of population. But there might be difficulty in such representation when there were ever so many minority communities. That difficulty might be overcome by treating all the communities below the Ezhava community as parts of the latter for purposes of representation in the Legislative Council and Sri Mulam Popular Assembly. It would be enough if separate representation be given to every individual community in the public service. Under the existing rules, the Ezhavas could not with success contest the seats in the general constituencies but could only depend upon nominations. Nominated seats being few, they could not satisfy the full requirements of the community. The only way of redressing the grievances of the Ezhava community and other communities similarly circumstanced was therefore the constitution of separate constituencies for them or the grant of adult suffrage. An alternative course would be to give due representation by nomination on the basis of population.

In conclusion, the member said that it was not his desire to take up a militant attitude but only to represent that the elevation of his community could be achieved only with the help of the Government. For instance, what little progress the Ezhavas had made in education in recent years was mainly due to the generous concessions granted to them by the Government in that direction. He hoped that the Government would view his representation with the same sympathetic spirit they had shown in the past.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Nanu, Government, I am afraid, are not at the present moment, prepared to make a change either in the electoral system or electoral qualifications. We must wait and see how the present experiment works.

Regarding the public service, no discrimination will be made against Ezhavas and no disqualification will be imposed upon them. They will be given their fair share along with other communities and with due regard to the dominant considerations of qualification, of efficiency and of fitness.

The Assembly adjourned for lunch at 1-15 P. M. and re-assembled at 2 P. M.

171. Disabilities of the Ezhavas.

MR. K. NARAYANA PANIKKAR (*Member, Nominated*) emphasised the need for a strict adherence to the principle of communal representation in the public service. Communal representation was the rule in the initial stages of the progress of every nation. There might be some who held a different view. But many high officers encouraged their own caste-men alone and it was deplorable that there were no Ezhavas among such officers. That was indeed the real disability of the Ezhava community. There were two things on which the Ezhavas based their claim for communal representation *viz.*, their overwhelming population and the comparatively small benefits that they were deriving from the Government. Out of a population of about 4 millions, the Christians numbered only 12 lakhs and the caste-Hindus 8 lakhs. The remaining 29 lakhs were composed of Ezhavas and other backward or depressed communities. Out of the annual revenue of about Rs. 2 crores, the Government were spending about one crore of rupees on public service in the State under salaries, travelling allowance, etc. The 20 lakhs of people above

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

referred to were getting only about Rs. 2 lakhs, of which only Rs. one lakh went to the Ezhavas. The Christians and the caste-Hindus were the recipients of the remaining Rs. 98 lakhs. The figures worked to Rs. 5 per head among the latter, while the Ezhavas and other communities got only one-tenth of a rupee each. There was one other factor which augmented the disparity and that was the existence of one or two departments closed to the Ezhavas. The Military department, for example, was consuming Rs. 31 lakhs every year. The Ezhavas got no share of that huge sum and the member pleaded for the representation of his community in that department also.

As it was, the Ezhavas were poorly represented in the public service. The Government might have realised the seriousness of the complaint from the fact that all Ezhava members spoke on the same subject. There were about 850 officers in the State service drawing Rs. 100 and above. Among them, there were only 8 Ezhavas. Including Mr. A. N. Panikker, there were only three Ezhavas in the Medical Department. His appointment could not be deemed to have been made on a communal basis but only in view of his high qualifications.

DEWAN: No names should be mentioned.

Resuming, the member said that, in the appointments recently made in the Medical Department, the principle of communal representation had not been adhered to. Preference should therefore be given at least in future to Ezhava applicants. Similar encouragement should be given to them in the Judicial and Education Departments. In the Registration Department, no Ezhava was appointed during the time of Mr. Mathen. The Co-operative Department was one of the departments that worked for the uplift of the depressed classes. But even there, due representation had not been given to the Ezhavas.

The Ezhavas had no access to any of the *satrams* in the State. Even into some of the *Pakuthi* Cutcherries and Anchal Offices they were denied admission. Similarly, they could not use some of the public wells and tanks. The grievances pointed out should be redressed at an early date.

The Ezhavas were not given due consideration in the matter of agricultural and industrial loans and scholarships in schools and colleges. No Ezhava had been granted a foreign scholarship. Special consideration should be shown to the Ezhavas in those matters.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Narayana Panikkar, the substance of your representation will be brought on record in the proceedings of the Assembly.

172. Measures for the advancement of the Ezhavas.

MR. K. R. PADMANABHAN VAIDYAN (*Member, Nominated*) said that the vital need of the Ezhavas for their advancement was the development of education. The main reasons for the backwardness of the Ezhavas in education were their poverty and the want of encouragement at the hands of the Government. The Government had granted half-fee concessions to Ezhava pupils in the high school classes. But such concessions were not granted in the college classes. That was not proper. Concessions were required more in the college classes than in the high school classes, as collegiate education was more costly than secondary education. As they were not given any concessions in the college classes, many Ezhava pupils were not willing to go in even for secondary school education. Ezhava students in college classes should therefore be given fee concessions.

The existing rules regarding the award of scholarships had not benefited the poor Ezhavas. If they were to be benefited in any manner, separate scholarships should be instituted for the purpose. Although provision had been made in the current year's budget for the award of special scholarships, the Government subsequently ordered that no portion of the amount provided should be spent. The order worked adversely against an Ezhava woman student of the Senior B. A. class of the Arts College who had applied for a special scholarship. That was hard. In view to remove such hardship, special scholarships should be instituted.

There were still some obstacles in the way of the entertainment of Ezhavas in the public service. The member was aware that the Government were interested in

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly